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This KS4 pack offers some structured approaches for the teaching of creative writing. Along with a variety of teaching ideas, it includes student-facing resources (some of which were specifically commissioned for the purposes of this pack) and suggestions for differentiation. The activities and ideas will help students to prepare for and plan their pieces of creative writing, hone their writing techniques, enhance their understanding of key aspects of writing (such as narrative perspective) and equip them with the necessary skills for their GCSE assessment. Because of these things, it can be used for all GCSE specifications including the IGCSE.

The pack is organised into sections, with each section focusing on a particular skill or technique e.g. varying your sentences, identifying and selecting a point of view etc. The pack could be dipped into on an ad hoc basis or it could form the basis for a unit of work. The resources are all available in adaptable formats, making it easy to differentiate the tasks by ability.

We've included links to each separate resource included in this pack so that you can access the resources directly on [teachit.co.uk](http://teachit.co.uk). We've also included the file number or name for each original resource – just pop this into Teachit's search engine. Most of the resources in this pack are Word documents, but we've also included links to PowerPoints and interactive activities where applicable. Please log in first to access any of these resources on Teachit.

If you have accessed this pack as a Teachit subscriber then the usual permissions apply. Teachit.plus subscribers can access the Word documents and any PowerPoints whereas Teachit.works subscribers will also have access to any interactive activities.

To help with navigation, there is a contents table which details each section that the resource is used in and the page number.

Our thanks go to contributor Stephen Mitchell who has written this pack and to the following contributors whose resources are also included:

Fran Nantongwe, Nicky Marquand, Michelle Holland, Alison Gray-Green, Edna Hobbs, Helen Down, Keziah Featherstone, Fiona Mansell, Judy Hornigold, Jill Childs, Julie Blake, Laura Anderson, Helen Magner, Kevin Brown, Anne Laverty, Richard Durant, Clare Rees, Sarah Moody, Christine Shaw Smith.

We hope you enjoy using this pack. If you have any questions, please get in touch: email [support@teachit.co.uk](mailto:support@teachit.co.uk) or call us on 01225 788850. Alternatively, you might like to give some feedback for other Teachit members – you can do this by adding a comment on the [Teaching packs](#) page on Teachit (please log in to access this!).

*Alice saw her friend steal a mobile phone in the changing rooms. Several phones have gone missing lately. She doesn't know whether to tell a teacher or not.*

Display the outlines for everyone to enjoy. As well as making them think about different types of conflict, you have plenty of plot outlines for students to choose from if they're stuck for ideas.

## Beginnings

One piece of advice for students: Don't start at the beginning. Start in the middle of the action. Too many stories begin with the alarm clock ringing, progress through all of the details of getting up, getting dressed and having breakfast, and run out of steam, space and time before the main character has even left the house so all the important action happens in the last paragraph.

### Attention grabbing

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You could try using the resource [Exploring beginnings](#) (22384) to get students to examine this important part of any story. Alternatively, [Arresting story openings](#) (openings) is a lesson plan with resources focusing on different ways to begin a story such as making the reader laugh or creating a tense atmosphere.

## Plans and planning

### Planning sheet

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Different contexts require different types of plans. [Story planner](#) (22410) can be used with any type of story to make the students think carefully before they begin. [Design your own horror story](#) (20912) helps students plan a horror story with a detailed plan and prompts to help structure the story.

### Planning guides

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[The Outsider](#) (14238) is an excellent resource to help with planning. (NB the Teachit website version of this resource is KS3 rather than KS4 specific.) Containing a selection of openings and a detailed planning sheet as well as assessment notes it helps to cover the key areas and is particularly suitable for KS3. [Creating a monster](#) (frankcss1) uses *Frankenstein* as inspiration with students writing a story that has a monster at its centre.

*'The first thing you should learn is that you never, ever tell the reader about your characters, you let him see them in action. If you wish your reader to intensely dislike Jacob Gronk, don't bother to give your reasons – just show Jacob Gronk stomping along the street, then stopping briefly to kick a kitten over the wall.'* Roy Lomax

**Read the following story 'beginnings' and answer the related questions.**

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1. *The loud speaker boomed, 'Three minutes. Competitors please take your places.'*

*Malad stood up, lifted his sword, looked along the blade again and moved towards the starting gate. He tried to breathe deeply and slowly, attempting to inhibit the flow of adrenaline until he really needed it. Joana still sat cross-legged, meditating. Her eyes were closed and her muscles relaxed. Her lips moved soundlessly and Malad realised that she was praying. He considered doing the same, but dismissed it as useless.*

- What do you think is about to happen?
- Can you tell where the story is set from the beginning of it?

2. *'Who the hell are you?'*

*James turned to see Mike, a boy of his own age, sneering at him. Mike was leaning against a B.M.X. Two others, Jack and Tom, also aged about fourteen, stood nearby.*

*'You new here, or something?' Mike snarled.*

*'Yes,' came the reply.*

*All he was doing was standing innocently in the café of a small country town, and yet, James was scared.*

- Where is the story set?
- How old is James?
- Do you think this is an interesting beginning for a story? Give reasons.

3. *Janine rubbed the sleep from her eyes. Pleasant dreams had been shattered by the high-pitched reality of the alarm clock. Not wanting to know whom she would find in the kitchen this morning, she remained in bed. Often Brian didn't get up until whoever it was was gone, and so Janine would have to try to make polite conversation with a stranger over breakfast.*

- At what time of the day does the story begin?
- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What do you think the story will be about?

4. *Martha knew that the end was near. She was only thirty-five, but disease took no notice of age. She'd only found out the day before, and she hadn't even told Bob, her husband. What would he say when he found that they only had three more weeks together?*

- What information do you find out from this beginning?
- What effect does the rhetorical question have?

### Task:

Write your own story beginning. Make it gripping and include hints of what might happen later in the story.

## Starter

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- Draw attention to the word, 'arrest'; ask what the French for 'stop' is (arreter); point out derivation.
- Hand out story opening and technique cards (see sheet for cutting up).
- Ask pairs to place each technique card next to the opening card that best exemplifies the technique.
- Take feedback by asking individuals to come forward and draw arrows to show the best fit between openings and techniques.
- Ask pairs to rank order the openings in terms of how arresting they are. Record on the board the number of first choices for each opening.
- Ask why the 'winning' opening is particularly effective. (It might well use more than one of the techniques.)

## Main

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- Direct attention back to the objectives.
- Have they read any stories/novels, seen any films that have particularly gripping openings?
- Remind class of the opening techniques they have experienced in this lesson.
- Show opening of *The Secret of Trencher Hill*. Read it aloud to the class.
- Establish conventions: ask the pairs to look at their technique cards and select those that apply to this opening.
- Get individuals to come out and underline parts of the text and label them with the relevant technique.
- Review what they have done and draw attention to other techniques used in the passage.
- Model: now continue writing the story (see guidance), thinking aloud about why you are writing what you are writing.
- Share: ask the class for suggestions for the next few lines. 'Filter' these suggestions, explaining your own choices where appropriate. Preferably use a scribe (possibly an able pupil) during this part of the lesson.

## Development

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- Ask pairs to continue the story, writing on one mini-whiteboard between them.

- During this time you should work with one group of 6-8, each of whom will have their own whiteboard. With a less able group you should break the process into short, simple stages, reviewing the work as they go: watch carefully and intervene when necessary. Start by giving pairs within the group a copy of the opening of *The Secret of Trencher Hill* and asking them to underline things they know from the opening. Limit them to three things. Following discussion, ask them to underline three bits that they can deduce something from. Model each step.

### Plenary/review

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- Get students to read out their story continuations.
- Get other students to comment on the effectiveness of the writing and how justifiable the continuation is in terms of what happened in the text up to that point.
- Ask the readers to explain how they have tried to involve the reader.
- Return the class' attention to the objectives and briefly review what has been learnt.
- Finally, ask them to evaluate the opening of *The Secret of Trencher Hill*. Would they read it all? Tell them you wrote it yourself!

<p>Buddy stole the money from his mother's purse just before he left for school.</p> <p><b>Buddy by Nigel Hinton</b></p>	<p>Start with something very odd</p>
<p>Parents are embarrassing.</p> <p>Take my dad. Every time a friend comes to stay the night he does something that makes my face go red.</p> <p><b>A Mouthful by Paul Jennings</b></p>	<p>Use direct speech</p>
<p>"I don't care if your friend Darren has a python, a cockatoo and a marmoset monkey," said mum, "the answer's still no."</p> <p><b>Jake's Magic by Alan Durant</b></p>	<p>Start in the middle of something</p>
<p>Alison lingered over packing her last case, as if she could postpone the moment of departure.</p> <p><b>The Coal House by Andrew Taylor</b></p>	<p>Make your reader laugh</p>
<p>A cold, wet day in December. The worst kind of day for the backlands. The clouds were so low they seemed to trail their mists in the tree-tops and already, at half past three, it was dark within the forest.</p> <p><b>The Giant Under the Snow by John Gordon</b></p>	<p>Talk to your reader: use first person narrative</p>
<p>The moment that the bus moved on he knew he was in danger, for by the lights of it he saw the figures of the young men waiting under the tree.</p> <p><b>The Wasteland by Alan Paton</b></p>	<p>Shock your reader</p>
<p>When Bill Simpson woke up on Monday morning, he found he was a girl. He was standing, staring at himself in the mirror, quite baffled, when his mother swept in.</p> <p>"Why don't you wear this pretty pink dress?" she said.</p> <p><b>Bill's New Frock by Anne Fine</b></p>	<p>Create a tense atmosphere</p>
<p>"Angus Solomon," sighed Ms Lowry. "Is that a penis drawn in your exercise book?"</p> <p><b>Bumface by Morris Gleitzman</b></p>	<p>Create a very clear picture</p>



## The secret of Trencher's Hill

It heaved up out of the darkness, a darker shape against the darkening sky. If ever there was a time to run, then this was it. But they couldn't run: they couldn't move; they couldn't even breathe. Sarah's fingers dug deeply into David's arm in horror. Slowly but steadily the shape swelled until its ragged outline loomed over them, the light wind brushing and blurring its furry edges.

"It's alive!" Sarah finally gasped. "What have we done?" But David only shook his head slightly. At last he knew the secret of Trencher's Hill, and now he understood what the old man had meant when he had warned them not to mess with the past ...

The teacher should now **model** a continuation of the story, thinking aloud.

They might continue *The Secret of Trencher's Hill* in this way.....

... Well, it was too late now: Benkan had risen from her sleep and was now very much alive.

“Come on, we have to warn Toby!” David snapped at Sarah. He pulled her round so that they were facing the comforting twinkle of street lamps from down in the valley. Now they ran, tripping over old tires and dumped fridges, desperate to return to the sane, familiar world below. But they had not got far when from behind them came an angry, disappointed growl.

Now **share** a continuation of the story with the class.

Use the following prompts to help you with your planning.

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What would you like the reader to feel when they read your story? E.g. amusement, surprise, pleasure in the achievement or punishment of a character, fear, pity etc.:

.....  
.....

Main character's name and other details (age, job, gender, etc.):

.....  
.....

Main character's major emotional drive or characteristic e.g. love, selfishness, ambition, pride in his/her job:

.....  
.....

Main character's specific purposes e.g. get married, make a lot of money:

.....  
.....

Who/what is the conflict with? (Circle one of the following.)

1. supernatural e.g. God, Devil, Fate
2. human beings e.g. mother, boss
3. living things e.g. animals, insects, plants, microscopic germs
4. non-living things
5. inner self e.g. guilt, loyalty, love
6. natural forces e.g. time, tidal wave, disease

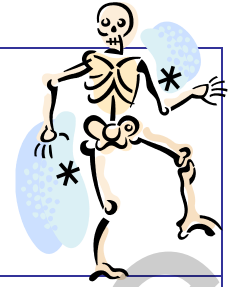
What is the trial or obstacle the main character has to overcome? (This should test the main character's major emotional drive.):

.....  
.....  
.....

Theme – does the story have a moral or a point that it is trying to prove? E.g. crime doesn't pay, working hard pays off; love is more important than anything else; blood is thicker than water etc.:

.....  
.....  
.....

Use the following prompts to help you plan your own horror story.



Describe your antagonist (monster, ghost, zombie etc.)?

Describe your main character (there could be more than one).

Describe the setting of your horror story. It could be on this planet or another!

Describe the first two people to die. Include information about how and why they die.

What is going to happen in your story? Outline at least three events that occur.

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- 

You will need to create tension/suspense. How do you intend to do this (tip: consider narrative or plot devices)?

Usually the main character escapes (though this may not happen in your story!). Outline the ending of your story.

**Now using your plan, write your own horror story!**

# Introduction

You are going to write a story called 'The Outsider'. It is up to you to make a decision about:

- plot
- characters
- setting
- genre.

To make your story more effective, experiment with different narrative techniques. For instance:

- use first person narrative so a character narrates the story
- use a second person narrative to involve the reader
- use a dual narrative so more than one character tells the story.

## How to begin...

### Opening one:

When summer comes to the North Woods, time slows down. And some days it stops altogether. The sky, grey and lowering for much of the year, becomes an ocean of blue, so vast and brilliant you can't help but stop what you're doing—pinning wet sheets to the line maybe, or shucking a bushel of corn on the back steps—to stare up at it. Locusts whir in the birches, coaxing you out of the sun and under the boughs, and the heat stills the air, heavy and sweet with the scent of balsam.

As I stand here on the porch of the Glenmore, the finest hotel on all of Big Moose Lake, I tell myself that today—Thursday July 12, 1906—is such a day. Time has stopped, and the beauty and calm of this perfect afternoon will never end. The guests up from New York, all in their summer whites, will play croquet on the lawn forever. Old Mrs. Ellis will stay on the porch until the end of time, rapping her cane on the railing for more lemonade. The children will always run through the woods, laughing and shrieking, giddy from too much ice cream.

I believe these things. With all my heart. For I am good at telling myself lies.

**Opening two:**

It was 7 minutes after midnight. The dog was lying on the grass in the middle of the lawn in front of Mrs Shears' house. Its eyes were closed. It looked as if it was running on its side, the way dogs run when they think they are chasing a cat in a dream. But the dog was dead.

I went through Mrs Shears' gate, closing it behind me. I walked onto her lawn and knelt beside the dog. I put my hand on the muzzle of the dog. It was still warm.

The dog was called Wellington. It belonged to Mrs Shears who was our friend. She lived on the opposite side of the road, two houses to the left.

Wellington was a poodle. Not one of the small poodles that have hairstyles, but a big poodle. It had curly black fur, but when you got close you could see that the skin underneath the fur was a very pale yellow, like chicken.

I stroked Wellington and wondered who had killed him, and why.

My name is Christopher John Francis Boone. I know all the countries of the world and their capital cities and every prime number up to 7,507.

**Opening three:**

Hi. I'm Zoe May Askew. Or Zoe may not. (Joke!) I'm fourteen. My friend at school is Tabitha. Tabitha Flinders Wentworth for short. She's fourteen too. If the name seems familiar to you it's no big surprise. Her dad's Paul Wentworth of Wentworth and Lodge (Developments) PLC, the outfit that shoved up practically every residential estate in practically every suburb in England. You're bound to have seen their boards, plus their ads on T.V. He's into about a million other things too, Tabby says. Security. Roads. Power. He's into power all right. Chair of the Suburb Selectmen, Chair of Schools Management Committee, etc, etc, etc. Dog leaves a mess on the sidewalk, Paul Wentworth'll make himself Chair of it.

They're loaded. Well, you can imagine. They live in this gorgeous architect-designed house on Wentworth Drive. That's right—Wentworth Drive. He built the place and named it after himself, and why not?

**Tasks:**

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1. Which story opening grabs your attention and why?
2. How have these writers tried to make their story openings interesting?
3. What do you notice about the narrators and the narrative styles used?
4. What effective techniques can you see?
5. What techniques can you use in your own story? Make a list here:

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

# Planning sheet

## **My characters:**

Use adjectives, metaphors and similes to describe them.

## **Setting:**

Where will all this take place? Use the five senses, adjectives, metaphors and similes to describe it.

## **The plot:**

What will happen?

*Beginning:*

*Middle:*

*End:*

## **Narrative styles and techniques:**

How will you tell the story? Will you use the first or third person?



# Self evaluation

**1 =** I haven't done this at all. It needs to be a target in my next writing assignment.

**2 =** I have done this but I think I could have developed it further and I may need to focus on this in my next writing assignment.

**3 =** I have done this really well. It is a strength in my writing.

Success criteria:	1	2	3
I can write an interesting story that my reader will want to read.			
I can write an effective opening.			
I can plan my story and think about the effects I want to create.			
I can use a clear opening—middle—ending structure for my story.			
I can use some interesting techniques like dual narrator/ first/ second person narration.			
I can use paragraphs to order my ideas.			
I can vary the length and structure of my paragraphs for effect.			
I can make the story flow in a cohesive (well ordered) manner / way so it makes sense and my reader can follow what is happening and make links.			
I can use a variety of simple, compound and complex sentences to add variety to my writing.			
I can use a variety of sentence punctuation like capital letters, full stops, question marks and commas.			
I can use ambitious punctuation like colons and semi colons.			
I can use accurate spelling, including ambitious words.			

The areas I am most confident with are:

The areas I need to target/work on are:

Use these ideas to help you write your own story about creating a monster like Frankenstein did.

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Describe the setting (time, weather, place)

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Describe what the monster looked like before it came alive

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Write about what the monster did, or the sounds it made when it came to life.

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What did you feel at this point?

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What happened next?

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.....

Use these ideas to help you write your own story about creating a monster like Frankenstein did.

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The story is set in.....

.....

The weather is .....

.....

The time is .....

.....

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Before it came to life, the monster looked like

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.....

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As it came to life, the monster made sounds like .....

.....

.....

Then it.....

.....

